Abstract

A device is disclosed for introducing a flexible elongated element through at least two portions of a subject. In a preferred embodiment, the device includes a proximal end and a distal end, and an advancement unit for longitudinally advancing the flexible elongated element toward the distal end of the device such that a proximal end of the elongated element may exit from the distal end of the device with sufficient force to pass through the subject. The device also includes a first curved die at the distal end of the device for imparting a looping configuration to portions of the flexible elongated element exiting the distal end of the device, and a second curved die at the distal end for receiving the looped flexible elongated element as it returns to the distal end of the device. In a further feature of the invention, a cutting mechanism is provided to permit the looped flexible elongated element to be separated from the remainder of the flexible elongated element. And in a further feature of the invention, the cutting

mechanism is adapted to deform both of the leading end and the trailing end of the looped flexible elongated element so that both ends are forced distally, toward the subject being sutured.

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